

Valdez

HISTORICAL WALKING TOUR

PIONEER CEMETERY

Alaska



MILE 1.5 RICHARDSON HIGHWAY
Valdez, Alaska



Anchorage Museum of History & Art - Library & Archives

**THE LOCATION IS STILL UNKNOWN FOR THE
SMALLER VALDEZ CEMETERY DEPICTED IN
THESE PHOTOGRAPHS FROM 1899.**

FOREWORD

Most of the written documentation herein was taken verbatim from historic articles, letters and church documents. Therefore, the grammar and spelling are kept in the original form.

The Pioneer Cemetery was used from the late 1890s through 1916, although it was not the only burial location in town. The people of Valdez used at least one other small cemetery, but its location is now lost; and pioneers of Alaska often buried their kin right in the backyard if they could not afford anything more. Fort Liscum, the local military installation of the early 1900s, also had its own cemetery. After the fort closed, bodies in the Fort Liscum cemetery were exhumed and sent to a cemetery in Sitka. The few headstones and names you see in Pioneer Cemetery are all that remain to commemorate the first pioneers of Valdez.

Records indicated that over 90 people were buried in this cemetery before the site was abandoned. In 1917 another cemetery (now known as the Valdez Memorial Cemetery) was created next to the railroad bed that later became the Richardson Highway. The new site may have provided easier access for the townspeople. In addition, it assured distance from the extreme high tides which dislodged headstones, and even unearthed caskets causing them to rise and float.

Each name you see in Pioneer Cemetery, and the many names lost through time, are those of true Alaskan pioneers. Through determination, perseverance, and good old-fashioned hard work, they established Valdez and transformed the original tent-city into the bustling Gold Rush boomtown celebrated in Alaskan history. Their lives and contributions to this community laid the foundation for the Valdez you step foot in today. This booklet was created to honor these brave souls.

May they rest in peace.



-VALDEZ PARKS MAINTENANCE & CEMETERY MANAGEMENT

1. Geneva Braxton
2. Josephine Zharoff
3. Mabel Thomas
4. Herman Magnuson
5. Dr. Louis Canacia
6. David Franklin Millard
7. Peter Johnson

8. Baby Frantzen
9. Helen Cameron
10. Bert Pullen
11. Minnie Meiss
12. Matt Lindquist
13. Captain Cameron
14. David V. Waldron
15. Louis Johnson
16. Jack Radovitch
17. Thomas Wikadel
18. Baby Meals

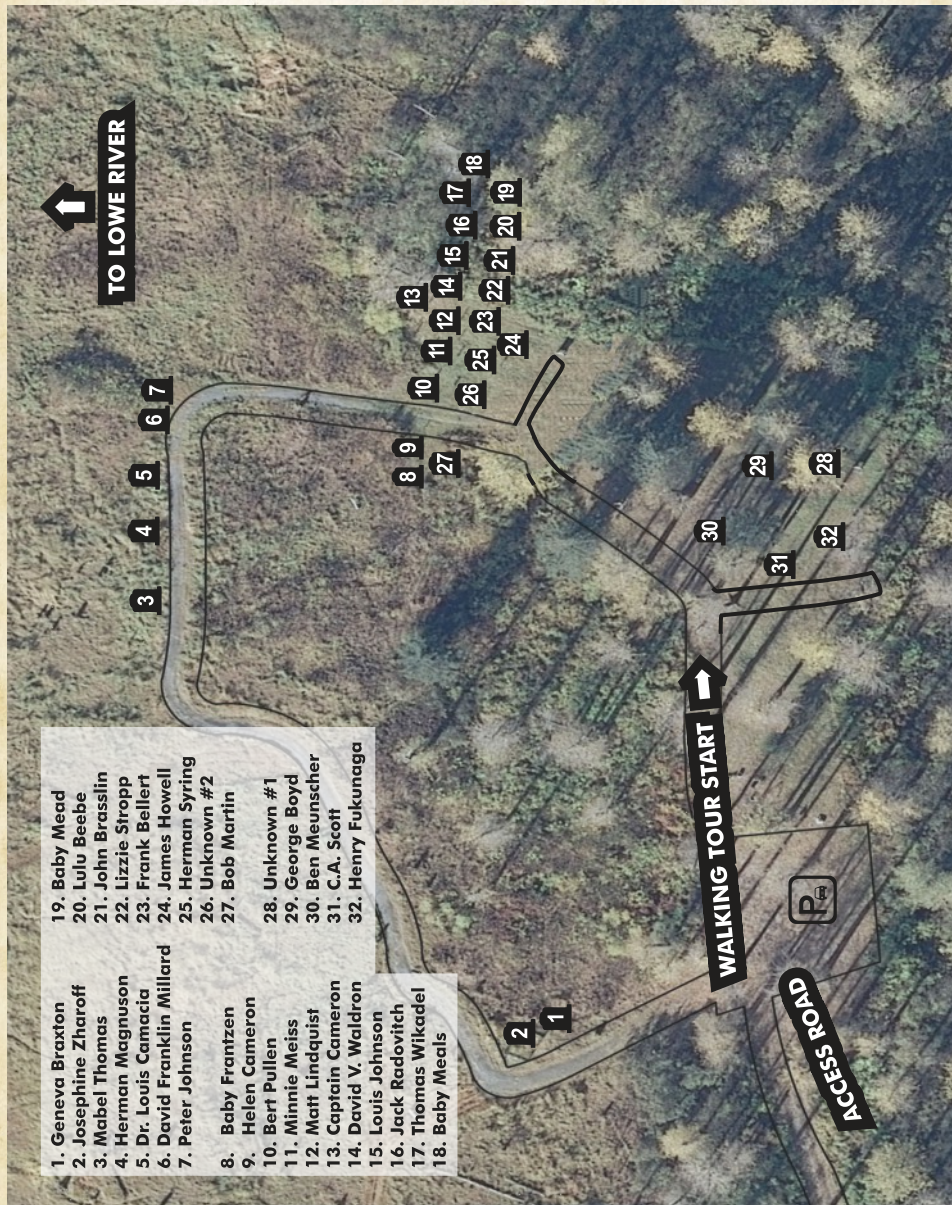
19. Baby Mead
20. Lulu Beebe
21. John Brasslin
22. Lizzie Stropp
23. Frank Bellert
24. James Howell
25. Herman Syring
26. Unknown #2
27. Bob Martin
28. Unknown #1
29. George Boyd
30. Ben Meunschier
31. C.A. Scott
32. Henry Fukunaga

TO LOWE RIVER

WALKING TOUR START

ACCESS ROAD

P



HENRY FUKUNAGA

Died June 21st, 1910 (33 years old)

Mr. Fukunaga's headstone reads in Japanese "He was a Cook at Tilikum Club." He died due to improper use of chloroform while in surgery.

These famous photos taken by P.S. Hunt, show a quasi-traditional Buddhist funeral. In traditional Buddhist practice Fukunaga's body would have been cremated after being displayed. However, P.S. Hunt's photographs depict Fukunaga's casket being lowered in a more western tradition.

Fukunaga's headstone is locally famous for being misread as Chinese. In the 1950s, Chamber of Commerce Director Dorothy Jennings Devault formally changed the name of this cemetery to the "Chinese Cemetery." This mistake was later resolved by the 1997 Valdez Historical Preservation Committee's efforts to restore the cemetery grounds. After clearing brush, putting in the roadway, and replacing several headstones, they petitioned the city to change the name to the "Pioneer Cemetery."

The photo below was labeled "Lowering the Body of Henry Fukunaga, Valdez, Alaska, June 12 - 10, 8-05p.m." by P.S. Hunt. A procession was common in a Buddhist funeral, however burying a casket was not. Traditionally, bones of the deceased were collected after cremation, passed around by close friends and family with special chopsticks, then placed in a small jar known as a "kotsubone." This jar would be brought home for a while, before being buried at a cemetery wrapped in a white cloth, or placed inside a hollow space in the gravestone.



UNKNOWN #1

No information exists about this gravesite. After over 100 years of dereliction with only brief periods of restoration, the name on this headstone lost its readability. No funeral records indicate who this person might have been, but based on the photos of Fukunaga's funeral it is presumed this burial took place between 1910 and 1916.



BEN MEUNSCHER

Died April 13th, 1912

Ben Meunscher was a Spanish War Veteran believed to have committed suicide while temporarily insane. He lost vision in one eye the winter prior to his death while carrying mail from Cordova to Valdez. The trail was a combination of water and land transport, and Meunscher suffered severe frostbite to one side of his face, a few fingers, and a foot. Neighbors and friends said Meunscher brooded over the fear of becoming completely blind, and considered taking the "Dutch Route." This was a common phrase at the turn of the century meaning to take one's own life.

Meunsher was buried with full honors and a military proceeding led by soldiers from Fort Liscum. The veteran's obituary kept in the City's historical archive states he was "well known in this section as an honest and hard working man."

BEN MEUNSCHER'S BODY FOUND ON TIDE FLATS

The body of Ben Meunscher was found on the beach down towards the islands this afternoon by a search party headed by Deputy Marshal George Goshaw. The body was floating in the wa-

ter and the tide was going out. It is believed he suicided while temporarily insane. George Robbins, of the Valdez undertaking parlors, has come with a sled to bring the body to town. An inquest will be held.

C.A. SCOTT

Died May 3rd, 1912 (53 years old)

According to C.A. Scott's Record of Funeral, he was a miner who died of acute gastritis. A small fence surrounds his gravesite, which was believed by some to keep the spirit contained, or used simply to keep out animals. Embalming practices in the early 1900s were limited, and people were buried within wooden boxes in shallow, hand-dug graves. Individual fences became a common practice for those whose loved ones could afford it.



JAMES HOWELL

Died June 2nd, 1916

From the *Valdez Daily Miner* June 11th 1916:

Old Prospector Laid to Rest. The remains of the late James Howell were laid at rest in the local cemetery yesterday. A number of the friends of the deceased accompanied the body to the last resting place, and a neat cross was erected to mark the spot. Undertaker Robbins had charge of the interment.



Old Prospector Laid to Rest.
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GEORGE BOYD

Died June 10th, 1909 (57 years old)

George Boyd died in 1909 from "paralysis," which was often listed as the cause of death when people of the early 1900s passed in their sleep of natural causes. His profession was a laborer, and his wife was presumed to be Anna Boyd. Local papers noted them to be some of the original pioneers of Valdez.

THE UNKNOWN HEADSTONE MONUMENT

The location of burial for the people listed below was either unmarked or lost through weather, tides, and neglect. This lone Unknown headstone pays homage to all of the pioneers of Alaska who called Valdez home. (The causes of death for the following people are written verbatim from historical documents.)

1902

Joseph Towney -*Heart trouble*

1903

Fred Anderson -*Drowned*

Dudley (last name only) - *Fatal blow received in Al White's Saloon*

Augustus Small -*Killed by steer on Valdez City Dock*

William D. Stewart -*Accidentally drowned*

1904

Louis Betters -*Blood poison*

Fred Madison -*Drowned*

Emily Milton -*Suicide, died in hospital*

1906

Lizzie Howard -*Hemorrhage of the brain*

Robert Macintosh -*Gunshot, murdered*

1907

William E. Clinton -*Erysipelas, St. Anthony's Fire*

Leo Cooper -*Heart failure*

Alford Doring -*Hurt in mine operation*
George Gandy -*Consumption*
James Harris - *Consumption*
Gustaf Hershman -*Rock fell on him in road*
Teddy Lee – [*Unreadable*]
Jesse H. Parker -*Died in Cordova, Adema of the lungs*
Martin Pederson -*Consumption*
Fred Reinhardt -*Got shot in canyon, Doctor cut off leg*
J.C. Williams -*Cancer on breast*

1908

James w. Garrett -*Typhoid Pneumonia*
Tilia Gravers -*No listed cause of death*
Matt Groops -*Pneumonia*
T.J. Harris -*Heart failure*
Otto Husby -*No listed cause of death*
Geo Meehan - *No listed cause of death*
Jenette Middlekamp - *No listed cause of death*
J. Munes -*Pneumonia*
James Phillips -*Burned*
Infant Rue -*Stillborn*

1909

S.A. Gray -*Buried in a snow slide*
Robert J. Hinton -*Drowned in Chitina River*
Infant Phillips -*Stillborn*
William Riley -*Suicide*
C. Ross -*Paralysis*
Edward Al Sargent -*Accidental suffocation*
William Wagner -*Heart failure*
William D. Winter -*Heart failure*

1910

John Macintosh -*Pneumonia*
Ernest Peterson -*Rheumatism complications*
William Webb -*Bright's Disease*

1911

Fred Cook -*Frozen, died at Shoup Glacier*
William Cummings - *Frozen, died at Shoup Glacier*

Conrad Nelson - *Paralysis*
Peter Peterson - *Angina Pectoris*
Eric Turnquist - *Erysipelas, St. Anthony's Fire*

1912

George Sloan- *Bright's Disease*
Unnamed Infant -*Stillborn*

1914

P.O. Berglund -*Snow slide*
E. Erickson -*Died on the S.S. Steward*
Wint Helt -*Suicide*
Arthur W. Hewitt -*Heart failure*
Peter Hofers -*Heart failure*
Baby Jaynes - *No listed cause of death*
Mrs. Long -*Cancer*
E. Peterson -*Bronchitis Pneumonia*

1915

William H. Blackwell -*Heart failure*
Beulah Elliot -*Consumption*
Geo. Hanson -*Heart failure*
Mat Jono - [Unreadable]
George Roubéhe - *Pneumonia*
C.J. Thrasher -*Bright's Disease*

1916

Baby Ferguson -*Stillborn*
Nathanial B. Raymond -*Rupture*
George Y. Yasheda -*Disease of the heart*

ROBERT MARTIN KILLED BY SNOWSLIDE; THREE COMPANIONS HAVE NARROW ESCAPE

Died November 1st, 1913

Robert Martin was a miner who was caught in an avalanche at Mineral Creek with his three companions, Warren Nelson, Jack Connelly, and E.S. Bruner. On the afternoon of a stormy day, the avalanche buried all four men in camp as Martin and Connelly slept. After digging for hours with the shards of a broken bottle, Bruner dug himself out of the compact snow. He heard Nelson calling to him from beneath the snow, and was able to dig his companion free. Both men were lightly clothed, and began digging for their campsite in desperate search of warmer clothing. Instead they found Connelly. Connelly was disoriented after being buried for seven and a half hours, but he was conscious. He knew he had been sleeping near Martin when the avalanche occurred, but was unsure of their fourth companion's whereabouts.

The men continued to search for Martin until darkness and a terrible storm forced them to desist. The following day, they sat in the mine entrance all day, scantily clad and without a fire, while the storm raged on. When the storm finally quieted two days after the accident, the men dug for several hours until they recovered Martin's body. His head was badly bruised from hitting a rock during the avalanche, and he was presumed to have died instantly. At much risk to themselves, Martin's companions carried his body to town and saw that he received a proper funeral at the Church of Epiphany, with subsequent interment at this cemetery.

VALDEZ, ALASKA, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1913.

ROBERT MARTIN KILLED BY SNOWSLIDE; THREE COMPANIONS HAVE NARROW ESCAPE

His Companions Were Buried For Hours Under the Slide But Escaped a Like Fate By One of Them Digging His Way To the Surface With a Broken Bottle---Slide Took Place Saturday Afternoon.

Robert Martin, a well known miner in this district, has died up on Mineral creek, where he was crushed to death by a snowslide on Saturday afternoon last. His three companions, Warren Nelson, Jack Connelly and E. S. Bruner, reached town this forenoon, bringing news of the disaster and the commissioner's office has dispatched men to bring in the body of the dead man. It is little short of miraculous that any of the men escaped with their lives, as all of them were buried deep under the last packed snow for some time.

The slide took place on Saturday afternoon, while all the men were in the day shift, were unable to work. Bruner and Nelson, who were on the night shift, were asleep in their bunks. Nelson heard the roar of the slide when it began but was unable to rouse the others before it

struck the camp and carried it away. None of the men expected to escape with their lives and when the slide stopped Bruner was surprised to hear sounds which he recognized as the voice of one of his companions. He asked his companion, who proved to be Nelson, if he had a knife, but the latter was unable to move his arms as the snow was packed around him so hard as ice. Bruner groped about in the hopes of being able to locate some instrument which would enable him to make an impression on the hard snow. His fingers came in contact with the fragments of a broken bottle and with it he managed to loosen the snow around his body. It required several hours hard work before he was able to reach the surface. His hands are badly lacerated by the glass with which he dug him self out.

He had been asleep in his bunk when the slide occurred and was awakened. When he was free he rushed to the tunnel several hundred yards away, where he secured a shov-

el, and returned to dig out his com- panions. He knew where Nelson was buried and soon had him clear of the snow and the wreckage of the camp head was badly bruised where it had struck a rock. Nelson had also been lightly crushed when in contact with a rock while he was being swept along by the slide. It is not known if he was killed. After recovering the body of Martin the men set out for town and had considerable difficulty in getting up the mountain, as the place where they were working was at an altitude of five thousand feet.

The slide had buried the men and wreckage of their camp in within a few feet of a precipice more than one thousand feet high. Had they been carried over all would have suffered instant death and it might have been some time before their fate would have been known. They were completing a tunnel on the big Four claims on Mineral creek, which are under bond to C. H. Morris people. The big Four claim was located by Bob McIntosh, Shurtz Bill, Jack Cook, Ben Price and Gus Cameron.

UNKNOWN #2

No information is known about this gravesite, as the headstone weathered to unreadable before restoration efforts began. According to the Record of Funeral this site was likely unused in 1914, so it is possible that this gravesite was dug between 1914 and 1916. This person's name may be among those listed on the Unknown Headstone Monument, or their burial information may have been lost altogether.

The City of Valdez did not regulate burial procedures in any local cemetery until the 1960s, before which the upkeep of the grounds was left to a few dedicated citizens. Much of the historical knowledge of this cemetery was collected from newspaper articles, public knowledge, and historical funeral records.

HERMAN SYRING

Died June 6th, 1914, 6:00 am (60 years old)

Herman Syring was one of the original pioneers of Valdez. Syring arrived in 1898 when the city consisted of a gathering of tents at the mouth of the Valdez Glacier Stream. He died of complications from Bright's disease. At the time, Bright's disease was a broad diagnosis for kidney related illnesses, including anything from infection to renal failure.

Syring and his wife owned the Arctic Hotel and many other valuable pieces of property in Old Town Valdez. *The Alaska Prospector* stated:

"Nearly every pioneer of Valdez went to the cemetery to assist in the last rites and funeral service. Mrs. Boyd [presumed Anna Boyd, wife of George Boyd] accompanied the widow, and did everything possible to assuage her great grief."

VALDEZ PIONEER CROSSES DIVIDE

Herman Syring, Well Known Citizen,
of Valdez, Dies From Complica-
tion of Diseases.

Herman Syring, who came to this city when it was but a collection of tents, and who has been a resident of this section since 1898, died at an early hour this morning as the result of a complication of diseases. Arrangements for the funeral services have not been made as yet.

Mr. Syring came to Valdez in 1898 and with his wife crossed the Valdez glacier, establishing camp ten miles from the floor of the glacier on the Klondike; later in the fall returning to Valdez and have remained here ever since. Mr. and Mrs. Syring are the owners of the Arctic hotel and also many other pieces of valuable Valdez improved real estate.

The deceased leaves many friends, especially among the oldtimers. He was sick but a few days when called to cross the divide.

SYRING FUNERAL CROWDS CHURCH

Funeral Services for the Late Her-
man Syring Fill Episcopal Church
to Overflowing.

Men and women in all walks of life crowded the Episcopal Church this afternoon to pay their last respects to the earthly remains of Herman Syring, and to hear the beautiful service of the church, conducted by the rector, Rev. W. H. Ziegler.

The casket was covered with flowers made into wreaths, crosses and anchors, sent by his friends. Nearly every pioneer of Valdez went to the cemetery to assist in the last rites of the funeral service. Mrs. Boyd accompanied the widow, and did everything possible to assuage her great grief. Dr. Von Gunther and Adam Swan officiated as pall bearers.

FRANK BELLERT

Died May 1st, 1914 (45 years old)

Little is known about Frank Bellert. He died in Valdez and his listed cause of death was suicide. The only information found about his grave was a notation from John Brasslin's Record of Funeral, indicating he was buried between Herman Syring and Lizzie Stropp.

LIZZIE STROPP

Died February 18th, 1914

(49 years old)

Lizzie Stropp was killed in an avalanche at Keystone Canyon the same day as P.O. Berglund (whose resting place in this cemetery is unknown). Stropp was a Cook and Berglund a Contractor. Both of their funerals were held at 10:00 am on February 28th, 1914, and the bill for both burials paid for by "son + daughter." Both of their Records of Funeral list them as married, so one may speculate that they may have been married to each other.



(Above) Keystone Canyon camp sometime before 1910.



(Above) the Cliff Gold Mine photographed from the water.

JOHN BRASSLIN

Died December 28th, 1913

(50 years old)

John Brasslin was a miner who suddenly passed away at the Cliff Gold Mine on his first day of work before stepping foot in the mine. When he arrived at the mine for his first shift, he suffered massive heart failure, or as his Record of Funeral states, "dropped dead."

He had a wife and children in Tacoma, Washington, and the

miners at the Cliff Gold Mine paid his

expenses. The expense of sending his body home to Tacoma was likely too much for his family to afford.

LULU BEEBE

Died February 2nd, 1911 (53 years old)

Lulu (Harshfield) Beebe died of heart disease. Historical notations disagree on the original placement of her headstone. Her headstone likely moved due to high tides, bear vandalism, earthquake, tsunami, or simply falling over and being replaced incorrectly. Wherever her body may lie within Pioneer Cemetery, her headstone stands here in monument to her life.

BABY MEAD

Died October 22nd, 1915

Baby Mead was a stillborn child whose funeral charge was paid by Geo. M. Mead. Infant mortality rates were so high in the early 1900s that the American Association for the Study and Prevention of Infant Mortality was formed in 1909. The most common causes of stillbirth in the early 1900s may have been from birth defects caused by influences of the environment and lifestyle on the mother's health. A proper sterilized hospital was hard to find on the Alaskan frontier, and most children were born at home with help from the local doctor or other women in the community.

BABY MEALS

Died November 24th, 1915

This stillborn infant was presumed to be the child of William M. Meals, since he paid for the funeral expenses. William Meals would have been around 34 years old when Baby Meals died, as he is listed in *Ben Booher's Diary* as "age 18, weight 150" around 1899. We know little of his life, only that he lived in Valdez and Juneau for about 50 years and was survived by his wife.

THOMAS WIKADEL

Died August 6th, 1915 (52 years old)

Thomas Wikadel died of freezing and pneumonia in mid August. A small notation is made of his burial location, stating his occupation to be "Restaurant." He was a single man whose funeral expenses were paid by his own estate.

JACK RADOVITCH

February 6th, 1916 (37 years old)

Jack Radovitch was a miner who died from pneumonia while at Fort Liscum. Fort Liscum was an Army post, once located across the bay near what is now the terminal of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. The installation contained 37 buildings, including barracks, a hospital, a stable, a small church, and a bakery.

Radovitch was a practicing Catholic who received last rites from Father Corbelt and a Catholic funeral service.



LOUIS JOHNSON

December 8th, 1912 (46 years old)

Louis Johnson was a teamster and member of the Eagles Lodge. He died of heart failure, and the local Eagles Hall in Old Town Valdez hosted his funeral.

MINNIE MEISS

February 8th, 1913 (19 years old)

Edwina "Minnie" Meiss only lived in Valdez for one year, working as a Telephone Exchange Girl. Her Record of Funeral states that she died of "stomach trouble." An article in the local newspaper said she had been suffering for sometime but her recovery seemed imminent, when her health suddenly declined. Her father had only recently sent for her "from the States," and was devastated that their reunion was so short.

DAVID V. WALDRON

Died November 15th, 1912 (89 years old)

David V. Waldron was born in Rockland County, New York on March 23rd, 1823 and was just shy of 90 years old at the time of his death. After a life of travel, adventure, and entrepreneurship, the millionaire amusement park tycoon burned to death in his cabin in Valdez. On the night of his death, Waldron went to bed fully clothed to combat the cold, and placed a light bulb in the blankets to warm his feet. The wool blankets ignited and severely burned most of Waldron's lower body. Responding to the smoke, neighbors carried him across the street, where he spoke his last words, "My God," before passing a few minutes later. An investigation of the incident followed, but no foul play was presumed.

Waldron wandered west as a young man. For several years he ran the Pony Express from Montana to as far north as Edmonton, Alberta. He later became a trader and trapper for the Hudson Bay Company, prospected and mined in Montana and British Columbia, became sheriff of a Montana county, and eventually became a deputy United States Marshal in Washington Territory in 1851.

After accumulating considerable money in the Northwest, Waldron went to Los Angeles in the late 1870s. There he built an amusement park known as Washington Park (later named Chutes Park).

Waldron built and operated the first street car line in Los Angeles, known as the Main Street Line, which connected the center of the city with his park.

By the early 1880s, Mr. Waldron's was one of the wealthiest men in Los Angeles. His real estate would be worth over \$3 million today. He donated his park to the city, and began travelling around the world with a theatrical company.

When Waldron's theatrical trip around the world proved unprofitable, he returned to Los Angeles to find himself involved in a bitter fight with rival street car lines. This fight cost Waldron most of his fortune. And may have helped reawaken his need to move.

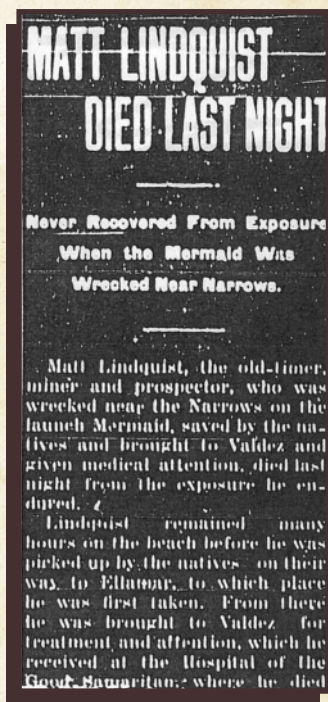
This time, Waldron moved north, and in 1902 he arrived in Valdez. He was a skilled carpenter, and built several small rental houses. As Waldron aged, he stopped working and lived quietly in Valdez for many years. He left two adopted sons in Los Angeles, and a niece in New York. He had been married twice; his first wife died and he separated from the second.

MATT LINDQUIST

February 6th, 1913 (42 years old)

Matt Lindquist was aboard the vessel *Mermaid* when it ran aground. His companion, Charley Rua, who owned the boat, was presumed lost at sea. The *Alaska Prospector* stated that Lindquist's memory of the event was unreliable, after he gave two different accounts about how the vessel ran aground. First he claimed Rua had been asleep when they struck the shore. Later he claimed that Rua said he would stay with the boat while Lindquist went ashore in the dark. Allegedly Rua was nowhere in sight when Lindquist returned to the boat.

A group of Native Alaskans found Lindquist on the beach near the Narrows and Sawmill Bay. They took him to Ellamar, from there he made his way to Valdez. He suffered from frozen feet among other injuries, and his listed cause of death was "pneumonia and exposure." Lindquist was a miner, and having been in Valdez since its inception as a town, he was considered an "old timer."



CAPTAIN CHARLES CAMERON

Died October 29th, 1911 (56 years old)

Charles H. Cameron died of pneumonia. It is unclear whether or not he was related to Helen Cameron, daughter of Fred Cameron, who was also buried in this cemetery. The Church of Epiphany records list him as Captain, as his headstone indicates. However his Record of Funeral states his profession was a miner, as so many were in those days.

BABY FRANTZEN

Died September 6th, 1913

Baby Frantzen was stillborn. It was common practice to bury infant caskets at the end and beginning of rows. Cemetery plotting was not as exact as it is today, and people were buried by hand with no regulations on placement or grave depth.

BERT PULLEN

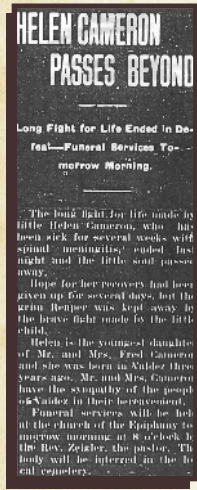
Died March 1st, 1913 4:00 pm
(34 years old)

Robert Pullen was instantly killed in a mining accident at the Cliff Gold Mine. He had gone to the loading station with sticks of dynamite to load a round of holes. Given the position in which his body was found, it is suspected that a stick of dynamite exploded at close range, and he endured massive injuries to the head and torso. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge and the Miners Union. He was well known in Valdez, and left a mother and sister in London, England, and brother in Vancouver, B.C. He had once been blown up while working on the Cordova railroad to the Kennecott Copper Mine, but had recovered from that accident prior to the one that led to his demise.



(Above) Miners at the Cliff Gold Mine. More than 50,000 ounces of gold were mined from the high-grade, underground deposit between 1910 and 1942, with an average of 1.74 ounces of gold per ton of rock.

HELEN CAMERON



Died March 11th, 1913 (3 years old)

Virginia Helen Cameron was just three years old when she died from spinal meningitis. According to the *Alaska Prospector* she had been sick for several weeks, and was the youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Cameron. Several of her father's photos are in the *Alaska Digital Archive*. Along with P.S. Hunt, Fred Cameron took many of the surviving photos of early 20th Century Valdez. Many of these prints can be seen at the Valdez Museum and in several city buildings in town. Despite having at least 3 other children, there are no records indicating any other Camerons were interred at any Valdez cemetery besides Captain Charles Cameron (56) who died 3 years previous to Helen. It is unknown if they were related.



(Left) Fred Cameron with his son Roy, 1930.
(Right) Ida Cameron taken in 1910 holding an unknown infant.

PETER JOHNSON

Died April 4th, 1913 (60 years old)

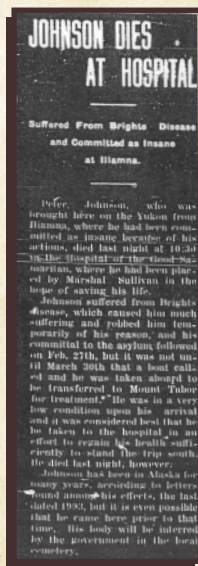
Peter Johnson suffered from Bright's disease. His record of funeral lists his death as "uremic poisoning," known today as acute renal failure. Johnson was brought from Iliamna to Valdez to be transported south for further medical treatment. He has no listed relatives on his Record of Funeral.

Johnson was diagnosed as insane in Iliamna, and would have been sent to Morningside Institute in Portland, OR, as Alaska had no mental health hospitals at the time.

Between 1905 and 1968 approximately 3,500 Alaskan patients were admitted to Morningside.

In the 1900s the term "insane" could mean contagiously sick, being homosexual, suffering from alcoholism, drug abuse, or even just being wildly unpopular. A jury of six peers could sentence a person for life, forfeiting all of that person's property and possessions.

Renal failure has been linked to neuropsychiatric disorders with symptoms such as delirium, visual disturbances, tremors, epileptic seizures, and cognitive impairment.



DAVID FRANKLIN MILLARD

Died April 11th, 1912 (6 months old)

David Franklin Millard was the son of Frank Millard, foreman of the Cliff Gold Mine. Frank Millard came to Valdez as early as 1898 to prospect for gold. He was also a prominent city clerk, and a laborer for the Valdez Dock Company. One of the main streets of Old Town Valdez was once called Millard Ave.

According to his Record of Funeral, the young David Franklin Millard died of convulsions, however the Church of Epiphany records stated he died of "croup, strangulation." Croup is an upper airway infection that blocks breathing and has a distinctive barking cough. Unfortunately, Millard's "strangulation" may have been caused by the croup remedy of the time. In the 1900s if a child had a severe cough, the doctor would often recommend a spoonful of sugar – with a drop of Kerosene, Carbolic Acid, or Ipecac! This treatment was to induce vomiting, which was thought to break up the child's phlegm. This treatment fell out of fashion around the 1930s when Amphetamines were first used as a decongestant.



Patients receive care at Morningside Institute in Portland, 1911.

DR. LOUIS CAMICIA

Died May 12th, 1912 4:00 am (72 years old)

Dr. Louis Camicia, for whom the Camicia Glacier was named, was an optician and jeweler who had a passion for glaciology. He was a Swiss man and largely self-educated. From 1898 to 1912 Camicia kept yearly observations of the Valdez Glacier's retreat. He was the only early Alaskan known to maintain annual observations on the behavior of a glacier. He also kept a continuous daily weather record, and seismic observations throughout his 14 years in Valdez.

Camicia died of complications of illnesses. He was very well respected in the community despite his aloof demeanor. Since he had no heirs, he asked that his estate be given to the children of Valdez in the form of a library. However Camicia did not properly define his will prior to death, and his estate was seized by the federal government.

Camicia was born at the base of the Maritime Alps on the northern border of Italy. As a boy, his parents sold him to a band of *lazzaroni* (homeless beggars who worked odd jobs). This troupe traveled throughout France, Germany, England, Canada, and Mexico where Camicia finally ran away. He worked his way through California for many years until he came to Valdez aboard the steamship *Valencia* in 1898.

After arriving in Valdez, Camicia became dedicated to his education, attending night school and working during the day. His few friends said he was a kindly man, and the local newspaper noted how his watch had stopped at the precise moment of his passing.

LOUIS CAMICIA DIED YESTERDAY

Wished His Estate to be Used for
the Benefit of Valdez
Children

At an early hour Sunday morning Dr. Louis Camicia died at the hospital of the Good-Samaritan, after a few days illness. Dr. Camicia, who was about 72 years of age, has been suffering from a complication of diseases and from the time he took to his bed but little hopes were entertained for his recovery. The deceased has been a resident of Valdez since 1898, arriving here on the steamer Valencia, since which time he followed his profession as an optician. Although of a retiring disposition and holding aloof from the people generally, he was much respected in the community. He was a staunch friend of Valdez and was always ready to do his part in the upbuilding of the community.

Quite an interesting story is connected with the decedent's early life. He was born at the base of the Maritime Alps on the northern border of Italy, and when a mere child was sold by his parents to a band of padroni, or lazzaroni, who traveled throughout France and Germany with the boy, later going to England and from thence to Canada and Mexico, where the young Camicia ran away. He finally worked his way into California, where he remained for many years, until he came to Alaska. During his early life he had no opportunity for schooling and it was not until he was about 20 years of age when he began to educate himself, going to night school and working in day time. He always expressed a sense of deep regret at his lack of education although he devoted a great deal of his time to study. To his few old friends he often said that it was his wish that whatever estate he left, should be used in the founding of a library for the school children of Valdez, as he wished them to have the opportunities which were denied him in his youth.



Dr. Camicia's office with many men posed for a photo.

HERMAN MAGNUSON

Died on July 20th, 1913 (48 years old)

The body of Herman Magnuson was found near the mouth of Mineral Creek. He was a miner thought to have lost his footing while crossing Mineral Creek, where he was swept downstream and drowned. He was a Protestant who lived alone, but was well known around Valdez for having prospected much of the area in his many years of residence.

MABEL THOMAS

Died June 24th, 1904

Mabel Thomas just returned to Valdez from a trip to the states, when she took her own life less than a half hour after stepping off the boat. According to the *Alaska Prospector* she died immediately after ingesting carbolic acid due to a pre-existing heart condition. Carbolic acid was frequently used as a means of suicide for "women of the sporting world," like Thomas. It was also used by the famous prostitute "Irish Kate" Barrett, who is sometimes blamed for the Great Spokane Fire of 1889 that burned most of downtown. By 1904 Valdez had become a small Gold Rush boomtown and had its own red-light district. By 1912, Mayor Ritchie suggested in a council meeting that the city should establish block 40 for the "restricted district," adding several blocks between this area and the rest of town, so as not to "be in the way of any families."

SUICIDE.

Mrs. Mabel Thomas, a woman of the sporting world, committed suicide last Sunday afternoon by taking carbolic acid. She had just returned from a trip to the states and had not been off the boat half an hour when in a moment of despondency she drank the contents of a bottle of carbolic acid. Although medical aid was secured almost immediately the woman died within ten minutes. That she did not suffer for hours is due to the fact that she was afflicted with heart trouble and the action of the carbolic acid on the weak organ caused almost instant death. The remains were taken charge of by the woman's friends and were interred in the local cemetery Tuesday afternoon. Rev. Taylor conducted the funeral services.

The city fathers met last night and transacted much city business. Two precincts were established by the council for the voting on November third and judges and clerks were named. The council also received a check for \$5.45 from the Valdez Electric company as the franchise tax on its income above \$1,000 for the month of August.

Mayor Ritchie also called the attention of the council to the fact that in establishing block 40 for the restricted district they had created a monopoly for the owners of that section and that the women were being forced to give up most of their earnings to their landlords. He urged the council to enlarge the "bad lands" by adding several blocks beyond Dewey street and between it and the dike, where they would not be in the way of any families, and yet at the same time the larger district would allow for competition among the landowners.

(Left) Mabel Thomas' 1904 obituary.

(Right) A 1912 newspaper article describing the Mayor's decisions regarding Valdez's red-light district.

CLARENCE DIXON

Died March 6th, 1913 (26 years old)

Private Clarence Dixon of the U.S. Army Signal Corps died on March 6th, 1913 when he took his own life. His listed place of death was Copper Center.

There is a note on his Record of Funeral that his body was to be shipped to San Francisco.

So it is possible that just a headstone was placed here in his memory.

The Alaska Communications System was constructed by the U.S. Army Signal Corps. This system of thousands of miles

of suspended landlines and submarine cable included the first successful long-distance radio operation in the world.



The U.S. Military Telegraph and Cable Office in Old Town Valdez. This photo was taken some time between 1900-1920.

JOSEPHINE ZHAROFF

January 16th, 1913 (18 months)

Josephine Zharoff, the daughter of courthouse Janitor Mike Zharoff, died at just 18 months old from spinal paralysis. The *Alaska Prospector* stated that her body would be interred in Ellamar with Mr. Zharoff's other children. However her record of funeral shows she was interred just outside of Pioneer Cemetery. In the 1960s her grave was mislabeled and thought to be associated with Geneva Braxton. However, that mistake was discovered and rectified in 1997

by the Valdez Historical Preservation Committee.



The Old Town Valdez Courthouse circa 1909. P.S. Hunt.

GENEVA BRAXTON

April 19th, 1911 (28 years old)

Virginia "Geneva" Harris Braxton was born in Canton, Indiana. She was a dressmaker who also ran the Glacier Roadhouse with her husband Joseph. The Glacier Roadhouse, also known as the King's Roadhouse, was located about 70 miles outside of Valdez, and was an important stop for travelers headed to Interior Alaska. Braxton's Record of Funeral states that she died of "heart failure" in 1911. By 1912 the Glacier Roadhouse was no longer in operation, and her husband Joseph was never interred at any cemetery in Valdez.



Above: Tonsina Lodge in 1920. Located 10 miles further outside of Valdez than the Glacier Roadhouse.



Above: Tonsina Telegraph Station

Description: Three log buildings with wood stacked to the right, woman is standing under porch of the building to the right, telegraph pole next to the building, trees in background.

Army Corps of Engineers Collection



Anchorage Museum

Keystone Ave, 1901.



Museum of History & Art, Library & Archives.

Order of the Moose Lodge, 1901.



Anchorage Museum of History & Art, Library & Archives.

*The home of Valdez's first newspaper,
The Alaska Prospector, 1907.*

These records proved to be amongst the few remaining historical documents used for verifying information for this booklet.



INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY, VALDEZ
The Reverend W. H. Ziegler is shown in the picture.
Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks



Anchorage Museum of History & Art Library & Archives

*The Church of Epiphany
during winter, circa 1910.*

CAUSE OF DEATH.	PLACE OF INTERMENT.	Date of Burial.	MINISTER.
Struck by car	Valley Cemetery	Nov. 12, 1910	Winifred H. Zigler
Burned while in bed.	Valley Cemetery	Nov. 13, 1910	Winifred H. Zigler
Heart failure	Valley Cemetery	Dec. 15, 1910	Winifred H. Zigler
Stroke at 56 years	Valley Cemetery	Jan. 13, 1911	Winifred H. Zigler
Fracture of Proximal	Valley Cemetery	Feb. 7, 1911	Winifred H. Zigler
Infantile paralysis	Valley Cemetery	Feb. 11, 1911	Winifred H. Zigler
Explosion of gas	Valley Cemetery	Mar. 4, 1911	Winifred H. Zigler
Thrombosis of heart	Valley Cemetery	Mar. 13, 1911	Winifred H. Zigler
Stroke at 62 years	Valley Cemetery	Apr. 1, 1911	Winifred H. Zigler
MI by gas	Valley Cemetery	July 1, 1911	Winifred H. Zigler
Drowned in Mill Creek	Valley Cemetery	July 22, 1911	Winifred H. Zigler
Myocardial Infarction	Seattle Wash.	July 23, 1911	Winifred H. Zigler
Death by fire during, demolishing	Tatletch	August 10, 1911	Winifred H. Zigler
Stroke	Tatletch	Sept. 14, 1911	Winifred H. Zigler
Stroke?	Valley Cemetery	Sept. 24, 1911	Winifred H. Zigler
Heart failure	Seattle, Wash.	Oct. 4, 1911	Winifred H. Zigler
Crushed in saw blade	Valley Cemetery	Nov. 8, 1911	Winifred H. Zigler

The Church of Epiphany. Reverend W.H. Ziegler kept much of the church's records from 1902-1925. These records proved to be amongst the few remaining historical documents used for verifying information for this booklet.

As you continue your drive to the **City of Valdez** you will see a sign for the **Old Town Valdez** site, which includes a memorial in honor of those who lost their lives in the 1964 tsunami.

Take the Old Town Virtual Tour from your phone:

www.valdezmuseum.org/old-town-walking-tour/

or scan the QR codes attached to each historic signpost.

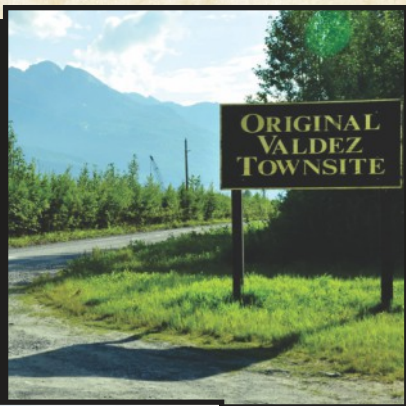
For a guided walking tour, please see the Museum Calendar at

www.valdezmuseum.org/calendar, or call the Valdez Museum

& Historical Archive at (907) 835-2764 to schedule a personalized guided tour.

The **Valdez Museum** gratefully acknowledges Bob and Linda Felland and ConocoPhillips Alaska for their generous support of this project.

Be sure to visit the Valdez Museum & Historical Archive located downtown at 217 Egan Drive.



The Valdez Museum's permanent historical exhibits reflect the history of Valdez, the Copper River Valley, and Prince William Sound from the earliest days, when Native Alaskans first occupied the area. Exhibits extend to the present day are located at two buildings in town.

We recommend that visitors first come to the Valdez Museum on Egan Ave. for an overview of our early history, and then visit our Valdez Museum on Hazelet Ave. to learn more about Valdez before and after the 1964 Good Friday Earthquake.

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www.valdezak.gov.149/parks-recreation
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